



# NAYI DISHA RESOURCE CENTRE

## AN ONLINE INFORMATION RESOURCE

Nayi Disha Resource Centre is an online information resource platform to promote children's development and support families of persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD).

Feel free to write to us with your suggestions or queries, at [contactus@nayi-disha.org](mailto:contactus@nayi-disha.org)



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# play with your child

Playing is fun

Playing helps your child learn better



## Thinking

Helps the child develop  
problem solving skills



## Language Skills

Helps the child  
communicate effectively



## Behavior

Helps the child manage  
their behaviour



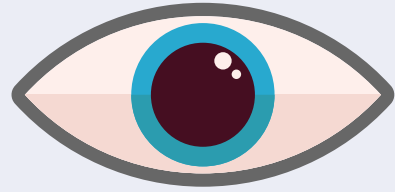
## Social Skills

Helps the child engage in  
turn taking and sharing

# how to play ?

You don't have to always buy a toy to play with your child. With a bit of thinking you can engage your child in many fun and interesting play activities. Here are some tips to turn everyday activities into play :

## **Observe your child's interests** That gives you a good starting point



Some examples of things and activities your child may be interested in:

### Objects

Trains, blocks, music, toys, books or movies.



### Topics

Dinosaurs, maps or the alphabet.



### Characters

Superheroes, film stars or cartoon characters.



### Activities

Bouncing a ball, spinning or singing.



Certain colours,  
numbers or songs



# how to play ?



## Follow the child's lead

Watch what the child is enjoying, then join in by imitating.

Let your child use things in a different way.

Let your child play with objects in unconventional and creative ways. For example If the child calls a cup a hat, let him/her play as they please. Elaborate your actions when engaging the child in a game. For example. I'm making a tower too, and mine has three storeys.

Give the child time to work things out.

Don't always jump in to make things easy.

Read your child's signals.

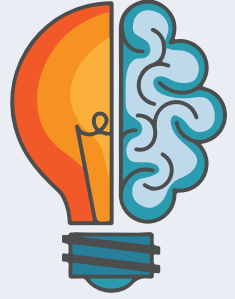
You can help prevent a tantrum by anticipating the time the child may switch over to other activities during play, or when he/she may need your help/guidance.

# how to play ?

## Be creative

Create play activities that align with your child's interests.

For example cut a picture of their favourite objects/animals and stick them in blocks or books. Sing their favourite songs while doing daily chores with you child.



## Play with everyday household items

It is educational, fun and cost effective. Encourage your child to match various-sized lids to their accompanying pots.



## Encourage the child to play in a variety of ways.

Have a large selection of tools that the child may use for play. For example blocks, connecting toys, cardboard boxes, tracks and cars, paints, pencils, paper, homemade clay, musical instruments, etc.





# how to play ?



## Play a variety of games

In the first couple of years, the two of you can do sensory and physical play like tickling, massage, clapping, chasing and Peek-a-Boo. You can then progress towards playing with building blocks.

As he gets older, you can engage your child in board games, puzzles and play Hide-and-Seek.



# playing socially

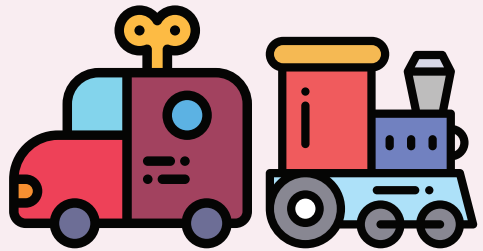
Engaging in social play (Interactive play) encourages the child to talk with and observe his/her peers. It provides opportunities that allow the child to build on each other's activities. This helps maintain a continuity to the play activity and makes it more enjoyable.



# Introducing objects in play

Use simple sensory play like tickling and touching to create to-and-fro interactions with your child. Imitate your child, notice and enjoy their responses.

Use toys that the child enjoys to play with, looks at or reaches for.



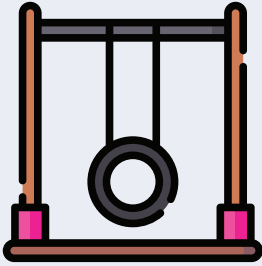
Once the child begins to play with the toy or object, join in by imitating what the child is doing. Take turns doing what the child is doing with the toy or object. Balance the turns so that neither partner is taking more turns than the other.

For example, if the child is building a tower, take turns adding blocks to the tower.



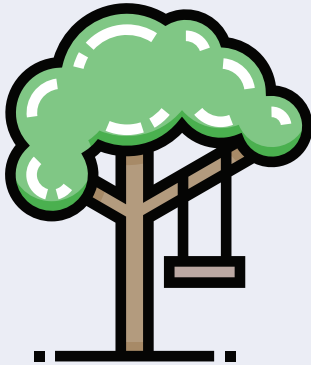
# physical play

Being active is fun for children; it helps their interactions, communication, attention and keeps them fit.



Infants love rough-and-tumble play, just make sure you and the infant are safe.

Clapping hands, chasing, running and jumping are all fun at different ages.



Create the right motivation by turning it into a game.

Walk to the school, to the playground or to see friends.

Children love being the 'first one' – walk fast or run, if it is safe.

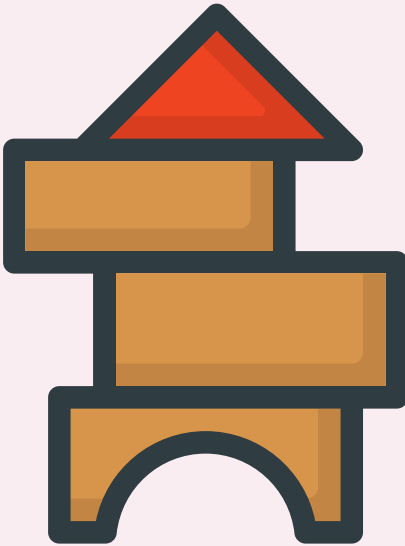


# elaborate the child's play routine



Once you and your child have taken many turns, bring in other toys into the routine to keep the play routine continuous.

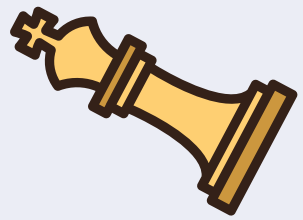
Here are some examples to help you understand it better-



If the child is building a tower with blocks and you are taking your turn to help build the tower, encourage the child to knock the blocks down when all the blocks are used. The crashing of the blocks should be fun and motivate the child to repeat the activity (rebuild the tower and crash it down again).

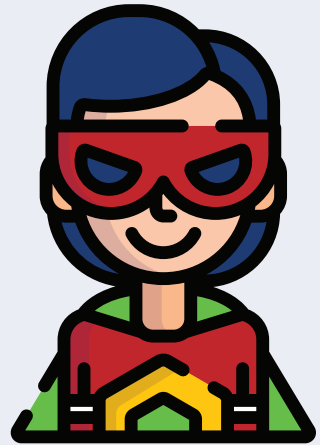
Once the routine of building the tower and knocking it down is mastered, expand the activity by adding a toy figure just before the tower crashes or using a truck to help push the tower down.

# symbolic play



From about 18 months of age symbolic play brings magic to children's lives - a box may become a car or a train, a pencil a banana or a phone, a friend becomes mummy and the child becomes a teacher or a doctor. Dolls made out of cloth or other material are given names and become a child's favourite toy.

Start with copying day to day activities, for example cooking, eating or cleaning. Share with and encourage the child to also engage in sharing with others. Children love taking on roles, becoming a cat or a superhero, mummy, teacher, police or a doctor. Take on a role yourselves to join in.



From about 18 months, use clay or playdough, pretend cooking, dressing up or drawing to encourage symbolic play. For 2½ years and older children use paper, bags, glue, paint and other assorted junk to make tools to play with.

# helping children play together

Playing games helps learning rules, sharing and socialising with the peer group

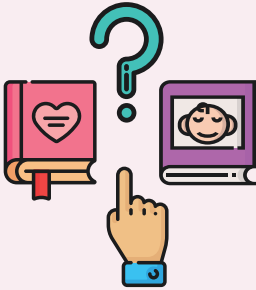
- Think of a game you have played or siblings have played. Ask the child, peer or siblings for ideas!
- Make it simple, explain rules, and assign roles “you are going to be first one”.
- Explain how each one must do some of these things: showing, asking or just turn taking.
- If a child starts playing alone ask a peer to start an interaction. Make teams, create a group feeling, give praise, motivate and share fun with them – don’t be like a teacher, rather like an older peer.



# extra toppings



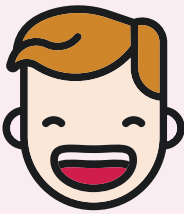
Use as many of these as you can in any play activity



**Visual choice** : During the play, or when changing activities, create a choice, pick up two toys or objects or books and ask, “Which one first?”. Wait for the child to indicate and when they do, give praise for making a choice. Print pictures of common activities and places to use for visual choice and for making a sequence of activities.



**Sing songs** with your child and encourage them to sing along with you. Play their favourite songs in the house or in the car, regularly. This may encourage them to start singing along with you and the audio in the background.



**Joint attention** towards a toy/object by engaging in ‘Show and Tell’ gets the child to become excited by what he/she needs to show and describe to his/her playmates. Start a game like ‘I spy’, alongside activities that involve actions. For example, Making a toy such as cat or a dog jump or bark.”



# extra toppings



**Sharing and turn taking** : Use any activity like pushing a car or a ball for this. Books and pictures are great for sharing, not just for reading - “ I want to look at it too!”. Name, act, match with toys or just enjoy.



**Use words or signs** to name, ask, show or talk about what you are doing. Play is a wonderful opportunity for introducing or practising words - but, don't try to teach, keep it fun and simple. Use childlike speech and expressions.



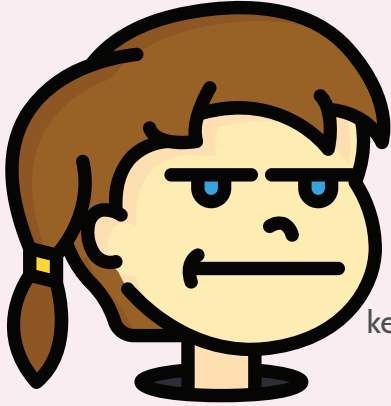
**Sorting and counting** : From about 18 months, use colours, shapes and pictures to start sorting things - “Which colour do you want?” , “All the red ones go in this box”, “How many do you have now?” - remember though you are meant to be having fun and not being a teacher!



**Appreciate effort**, actions and behaviour (not the physical looks or just the results) of your child, the peers and siblings. Notice the good behaviours and try ignoring the not-so-good ones.



# what to do if the child engages in inappropriate play?



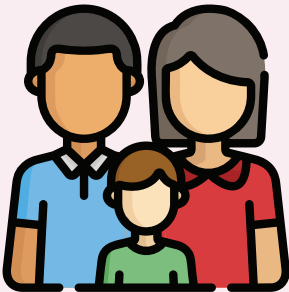
Sometimes play doesn't go as intended and the child may throw objects/toys, or act in ways that may appear inappropriate/risky.

Under these circumstances, do not lose your temper at your child, and find solutions to keeping the playtime fun and enjoyable, in spite of the brief meltdown.

**Divert the activity** into something more acceptable for example. "let's throw the ball in the basket."

**Distract the child** to another toy or activity "Oh look what this one does". Start a more fun activity "I am going to tickle you".

If the child is doing something unacceptable such as hitting another person, say to the child in a neutral tone of your voice, by saying "No, don't do that". Briefly withdraw your attention from the child and calmly remove the toys (and, if required, the child). But, don't become negative or angry with the child and, after a brief pause, change the tone to reflect a positive note when proposing an alternate play activity. "We are going to play with this now". Give a lot of positive attention as soon as the child shifts to another activity. This way you are rewarding the good behavior and not the bad one.



**Change the situation** by moving the child to a different area.

# what to do if the child doesn't want to stop playing?

**Prepare for the change** in play activity/routine. “ We are going to play with this one more time” or “This is the last time ”.

**Count or use a timer for change** “ I will count to 10 and then we stop ” or “ Two more minutes ”.

**Explain what is happening** “ We stop and then get ready/ have food etc ”.

**Provide alternatives** “ I can't play anymore, but you can draw/colour, look at the book, do the puzzle or play with your car ”.

**Acknowledge the child's disappointment** “ I know it is not nice to stop this, but we will play this again later ”.



# play ideas for different ages

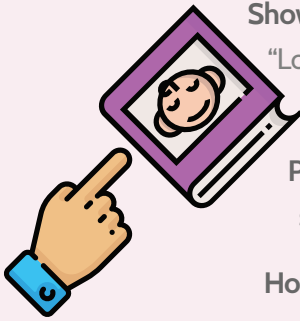
For Babies Under 6 Months



**Imitate the sounds** your baby makes and try to have a “conversation” with your baby as you coo or babble back and forth with one another.

**Sing your favourite songs** or lullabies to your baby.

**Talk to your baby** as you do things: “I’m going to change your nappy now. First we take off your pants.”



**Show your baby things** in his/her surroundings, for example, “Look at your brother? What is he doing?” or “Look at those bright lights.”

**Point out bright coloured pictures** in books with contrasting shades. Let your baby touch objects with different textures.

**Hold a toy within reach** so he/she can touch it with this/her hands or feet.



# play ideas for different ages

For Babies 6 to 12 Months



**Use routine**, such as bed time, to interact with your baby and read or describe pictures from books.

**Use bath time** as a time to gently splash, pour, and explore the water.

**Play peek-a-boo.** Cover your face and then remove your hands while you say, "Peek-a-boo!" and make a surprised facial expression.

**Play "Where has it gone?"** Hide a toy under a blanket and ask him/her where the toy went. Search with your baby.

**Play hide and seek.** Hide yourself and encourage him/her to come and find you.

**Fill containers** with toys/objects such as sand, and repeat the process by dumping the contents.

**Imitate your child's sounds.** Encourage a dialogue by taking turns listening and copying each other's sounds.



# play ideas for different ages

For Toddlers 12 to 24 Months

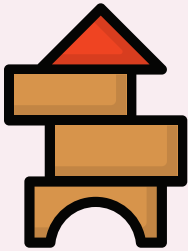


**Sing songs or nursery rhymes** while changing a nappy or getting ready for bed.



**Use play objects** to act out pretend actions. For example, use a toy phone to say, “Ring ring ring. It’s the phone. Hello. Oh, you are calling for Teddy. Teddy, the phone is for you.” Use a toy car to move across the floor saying, “Vroom, vroom, go car go!”

**Keep reading and talking together.** When looking at a book, ask your child questions about the pictures. For example. “Where is the doggy?” Show your excitement by when your child points to the object: “Yes, you know where the doggy is!”



**Play hide and seek!**

**Help your child stack blocks** and then share his/her excitement when he/she knocks it down.

**Explore the outdoors** by taking walks, visiting a park, or helping your child run up or down the lawn.



# play ideas for different ages

For Children Older Than 24 Months



**Continue to read and talk often to your child.** When looking at books together, give your child time to look at the pictures before reading the words.



**Encourage thinking.** Ask some questions to explore “why do you think he did that” and “What do you think will happen next”.

**Dance and jump around** to music and encourage your child to join you.

**Support your child’s imagination** by providing dress-up clothes like scarves, hats, pocketbooks, or your old shoes; and props such as plastic kitchen bowls and plates, or toy musical instruments.



**Encourage your child’s creativity** by playing with crayons, markers, play dough, finger paint, paints etc.

**Use play objects** that look like the “real” thing: child-sized brooms and dust pans, pots and pans, etc. The toys get smaller with age.

**Introduce games with rules,** as the child gets older, and start including other children into the play routine.



# toy safety

Children put toys in their mouth and can hurt themselves or damage their health if the toy is not safe. Please ensure the following for safety during playtime routines :



**The material and paint on the toys is non-toxic.**

Lead paint is very toxic.

**Toys should be large enough** - at least  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches (3 cm) in diameter and  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches (6 cm) in length - so that they can't be swallowed or lodged in the windpipe and restrict breathing.



**Avoid marbles, coins, balls,** and games with balls that are 1.75 inches (4.4 cm) in diameter or less because they can become lodged in the throat above the windpipe and restrict breathing.



**Battery-operated toys** should have battery cases that secure with screws so that kids cannot pry them open. Batteries and battery fluid pose serious risks, including choking, internal bleeding, and chemical burns.

**Toys should be strong enough to withstand chewing.**

Ensure that toys do not include small parts such as buttons / eyes / wheels that can be pulled loose by the child. Exclude using toys that have sharp ends or parts that can extend (rods / strings) longer than 7 inches (18cm) into the back of their mouth.



**Soft/ cloth toys should be washable**

Ensure all toys are cleaned regularly for good hygiene practices



# visit our webpage for other resources

Here are some other resources that can be found on our website

[www.nayi-disha.org](http://www.nayi-disha.org)



**A CHILD'S LANGUAGE  
DEVELOPMENT, AND  
WAYS TO PROMOTE IT.**



**AN INFANTS' HEARING  
BEHAVIOR: A CHECKLIST  
FOR PARENTS**



**IMPORTANCE OF PLAY IN  
EARLY INTERVENTION**

Feel free to write to us with your suggestions or queries,  
at [contactus@nayi-disha.org](mailto:contactus@nayi-disha.org)



The content in this booklet, expert feedback and guidance has been provided by

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He is passionate about enhancing knowledge and skills of practitioners and parents and runs a website

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This booklet has been created by Nayi Disha Resource Centre



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